REPORT FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Continuing Education Requirement

Massage therapists strive for professional excellence through regular assessment of personal strengths, limitations and effectiveness and by continued education and training.

(AMTA Code of Ethics — Revised, 1989)

One of my first tasks as incoming National Director of Education has been to put into motion the continuing education requirement for active members. This new requirement reflects the AMTA's commitment to professionalism in massage therapy, and embodies the guiding values of the Association — *care and competency*.

A competent massage therapist has the knowledge and skills necessary to provide the highest quality care for clients. That knowledge and skill is acquired through initial and continued learning.

Professional development is a lifelong process that does not stop when you get your diploma. In fact, the word "commencement" often used to describe graduation from school actually means "a time of beginning." The groundwork is laid in school, but the real and most meaningful learning takes place throughout your career as you develop a much deeper understanding of your work through continued education and training.

To those who enter the field of massage therapy through alternative pathways such as apprenticeship, self-study or a variety of other educational programs, continuing education takes on a special significance. It may constitute the groundwork as well as the more advanced learning, and so special care must be taken to choose those educational opportunities which build a solid foundation of knowledge and skills.

Seasoned practitioners may either seek depth in their work through intensified study of a particular style of bodywork, or they may choose to integrate various styles for a more eclectic approach. In any case, professionals undergo continual change and growth in their work brought about by greater understanding through continued learning.

Ours is a profession rich in diversity of approaches as reflected in the great variety of classes, workshops, trainings and seminars offered by teachers, schools and institutes. There is a special value in the person to person interaction that takes place between teacher and learner that is different from the less personal learning such as reading a book or watching a video. This personal contact with some of the best teachers in the country is available in traveling workshops and national conventions and conferences.

The AMTA sponsors a number of excellent educational opportunities specifically designed for professional development of the massage therapist. Educational programs given at AMTA National Conventions and Conferences, and at State Chapter and Unit levels are specially recommended to fulfill your continuing education requirements. AMTA ACE Instructors also provide quality learning opportunities.

In this first year, a minimum of three hours of continuing education is required for membership renewal in 1991. The Latin *minim* is the smallest liquid measure, i.e., about a drop. And three hours *is* just a drop of learning. The three hour minimum was recommended by the Standards Committee to get the program started, and will be studied and possibly revised in coming years.

Between November 1, 1989 and the 1991 renewal period, be sure to keep accurate records of the continuing education programs you attend. Include date(s), title and short description of the program, number of contact hours, name of instructor, and phone number or address at which the instructor can be reached for verification of your attendance. You will be asked to report this information for your 1991 membership renewal.

Any questions about the acceptability of learning experiences for continuing education credit, or any other questions concerning this membership requirement should be directed to the *National Office at 1130 W. North Shore Ave., Chicago, IL 60626, (312) 761-AMTA.*

Patricia J. Benjamin
National Director of Education
Illinois

Education Bulletin Board

- The ACE Instructor Program is under study and examinations will not be given until further notice.
- State Directors of Education should send all requests for membership entrance exams to the National Office in Chicago, and not to the National Director of Education.
- Beginning date for continuing education requirement is November 1, 1989 for the 1991 membership renewal.
- Registered Massage Therapist and Sports Massage Therapist exams will be given next at the Boulder Conference in May 1990. Requests for information and applications should be made to the National Office. (See center insert)
- National Education Programs:
  AMTA National Conference in...
  Boulder, CO, May 24-27, 1990.
  Miami, FL, November 2-11, 1990.